

January 9, 1996

I can compel you to reject it, even though you know the idea is sound and in accord with the discussion. So now let me remove your suspense by telling you what the amendment does. Senator Wickersham's proposal says, in three locations in his amendment, "except amendments which are substantially the same as any bill indefinitely postponed", and I would add the words "by a committee". Isn't that what we talked about? Isn't that what Senator Vrtiska talked about? Wasn't that Senator Will's argument? Wasn't that the thrust of Senator Wickersham's argument? So if the truth was being told all my amendment does is comport with the reasoning that we were given as to why his amendment should be adopted. I still don't think even with the amendment that I'm offering that we should do such a thing as is being proposed by Senator Wickersham. But if the body is of a mind to do it then let the amendment that he has drafted follow the practice that he and others have discussed, and that is it's more than a practice, it's in the rule. If a bill is killed by a committee it takes 30 votes to pull it from that committee to the floor. So, I am simply putting into his proposal the limiting words "by a committee". The 30-vote requirement to adopt an amendment, which is substantially the same as a bill that has been killed, would apply only if the bill had been killed in committee. I want to hear Senator Will's objection to this, I want to hear Senator Wickersham's objection, and I want to hear Senator Vrtiska's objection, because when they object they will make it clear that strengthening the committee system was not uppermost in their mind at all. They simply said that because it sounded good. I'm saying that if it sounded good to you and if you think that it was good when they said it, if you think it is good now adopt these words. And then you have not really changed the status quo, which from what Senator Wickersham's major argument was is his intent. I hope Senator Beutler will join the discussion because I want to hear him explain how this amendment that I'm offering goes counter to the rationale we have been fed as the underlying basis for Senator Wickersham's offering. When I talked about a bill being amenable to a kill motion that could be passed by a simple majority of those voting on General File, that was not discussed at great length. No great amount of discussion was given to the fact that a bill can be killed anywhere else along the line by 25 votes. The focus was placed on the committee. Senator Vrtiska even asked me do I believe in the committee system. I don't mix religion with politics, so I don't believe in that at all, Senator Wickersham...I mean Senator Vrtiska. These things